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CONTRIBUTIONS BRING UCSF FRESNO CENTER FOR CLINICAL RESEARCH CLOSER TO ACTUALITY

FRESNO – UCSF Fresno Medical Education and Research Program recently received three gifts totaling \$625,000. The contributions bring the planned UCSF Fresno Center for Clinical Research closer to fruition.

Central California Faculty Medical Group (CCFMG) and University Centers of Excellence (UCOE) pledged \$500,000 over five years. The gift entitles CCFMG/UCOE partial naming rights to the center's lab.

The Waterford Foundation, administered by the Assemi family of Fresno, pledged \$100,000 over four years. The gift allows the Assemi family to name the research center's main conference room.

The Borba Family of Fresno, whose support of UCSF Fresno spans more than two decades, contributed \$25,000.

"UCSF Fresno faculty and medical residents are currently engaged in about 165 clinical studies involving a variety of health issues many of which affect Valley residents," said Joan Voris, MD, associate dean at UCSF Fresno. "Thanks to these generous donations, we will be able to consolidate our research projects into one centralized facility - creating an atmosphere that encourages discovery and collaboration and importantly, improves patient care."

Clinical research under way at UCSF Fresno includes studies into acute lung injury, Alzheimer's disease, asthma, breast cancer, diabetes, hepatitis, HIV/AIDS, sleep disorders, stroke and Tuberculosis to name a few.

"A gift to UCSF Fresno is an investment in our community's future," said Karl Van Gundy, MD, chair of the CCFMG board of directors and chief of pulmonary, critical care and sleep medicine at UCSF Fresno. "The Clinical Research Center will further enhance our ability to recruit the finest physicians as faculty members and medical residents who will care for Valley patients and educate the next generation of doctors."

"Access to a comprehensive medical and research facility that can provide advanced health care in the Valley is truly a cause we are proud to support," said Darius Assemi, of Granville Homes and the Waterford Foundation, the philanthropic arm of the company.

Assemi also is chairman of the Dean's Development Council at UCSF Fresno and has helped raised funds to support the local medical education and research program.

"Our family has deep roots in the Valley and in UCSF's efforts to bring the best in medical technology and care to the region," said Mark Borba, partner in Borba Farms, who served as the founding president of the UCSF Fresno Medical Education Foundation in 1983. "More physicians practicing and conducting research here means patients need not leave our area to receive the most advanced treatments and medical expertise available anywhere."

(more)

The fundraising goal to establish the 3,500- square foot Center for Clinical Research is \$1.5 million. The facility will be located on the third floor of the UCSF Fresno Center for Medical Education and Research.

A total of \$850,000 has been raised to date, including the recent gifts and a \$150,000 donation from B.C. “Bing” and Wanda Bingham of Fresno last year. The research center patient waiting room will be named in honor of the Bingham.

The aim is to break ground on the center this year. Naming opportunities exist for four remaining rooms.

UCSF Fresno Medical Education Program, established 36 years ago, plays a substantial role in providing healthcare services to residents of California's San Joaquin Valley and training medical professionals in the region. The medical education program has trained approximately one-third of Central San Joaquin Valley physicians. Annually, UCSF Fresno currently trains 250 medical residents in eight specialties, nearly 30 fellows in 12 subspecialties and about 200 medical students on a rotating basis.

UCSF Fresno faculty and medical residents engage in a broad spectrum of research addressing health issues pertinent to the Valley. UCSF Fresno faculty and residents also care for the overwhelming majority of the region's underserved populations. In addition, UCSF Fresno provides academic preparation programs for middle- and high school students interested in the health professions through the Doctors Academy and Junior Doctors Academy. UCSF Fresno is a key partner in the UC Merced San Joaquin Valley Program in Medical Education and is expected to play a significant role in the training of medical students in the program. .

UCSF is a leading university dedicated to promoting health worldwide through advanced biomedical research, graduate-level education in the life sciences and health professions, and excellence in patient care.

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